

Appendix C

Results of Planetary Community Survey

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A survey was conducted on the Planetary Community Decadal Web site that posed two questions:

- What were the three most important discoveries of the past decade?
- What are the three most important investigations that should be done in the next 10 years?

The kickoff of the survey was during “NASA Night” at the annual conference of the Division for Planetary Sciences of the American Astronomical Society (DPS/AAS), held in New Orleans in late November 2001. A panel consisting of Michael Belton (chair of the Solar System Exploration Survey’s Steering Group), the chairs or vice chairs of the SSE Survey’s panels, and Colleen Hartman (NASA director of Solar System Exploration) took input from the audience of more than 200 in an open forum. The survey was sent out over the DPS/AAS e-mail exploder and distributed to the other planetary professional societies, directing everyone to the community Web site. Sixty scientists from 37 institutions responded to the survey. While self-selected and not a rigorous sampling of the planetary community, the results do have considerable value as a guide to what interested groups of people think about and expect from the Solar System Exploration program. It was most interesting that the concatenated opinions did not produce results that have not been already extensively discussed. The survey results are as follows:

- *The three most important discoveries of the past decade:*
 1. Extrasolar planets;
 2. The Kuiper Belt; and
 3. *Tied:* Oceans beneath the surfaces of Europa, Ganymede, and Callisto; and Mars-related discoveries.
- *The three most important investigations for the next decade:*
 1. The Kuiper Belt-Pluto mission (largest individual recommendation);
 2. Missions to and ground-based studies of asteroids and comets; and
 3. *Tied:* Study of extrasolar planets; and study and search for conditions under which life might exist.

